

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

APPLICANT : Yuko IWABUCHI et al.  
SERIAL NO. : Unassigned  
FILED : February 27, 2002  
FOR : METHOD AND APPARATUS OF AN INSPECTION SYSTEM  
USING AN ELECTRON BEAM  
ART UNIT : 2881 (Anticipated)

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
Washington, D.C. 20231

**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

SIR:

Prior to examination of the above-identified application the Applicants respectfully request entry of the following amendments.

**IN THE SPECIFICATION:**

Before the first line on page 1, insert the following:

-- This is a continuation of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/883,184, filed June 19, 2001 which is a continuation of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/131,383, filed August 7, 1998, which issued as U.S. Patent No. 6,348,690 on February 19, 2002. --

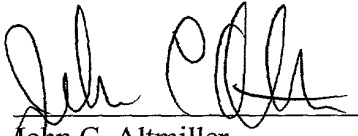
**REMARKS**

The specification has been amended to claim priority of copending Serial No. 09/883,184, filed June 19, 2001 which is a continuation of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/131,383, filed August 7, 1998, which issued as U.S. Patent No. 6,348,690 on February 19, 2002.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at (202) 220-4200 to discuss any information concerning this application.

The Office is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or § 1.17 or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-0600.

Respectfully submitted,

  
John C. Altmiller  
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Dated: February 27, 2002

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